

VZCZCXRO0147
RR RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHLH RUEHNEH RUEHPW
DE RUEHEK #0947/01 2370355
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 250355Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2606
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3226
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 0317
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BISHKEK 000947

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/25/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: GENERAL PETRAEUS REVIEWS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
WITH KYRGYZ GOVERNMENT

REF: 08 BISHKEK 943

Classified By: Classified By: Ambassador Tatiana C. Gfoeller, Reasons 1
.4 (a), (b), and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY. U.S. CENTCOM Commander General Petraeus held a joint meeting August 17 with Kyrgyz Minister of Foreign Affairs Sarbayev and First Deputy Minister of Defense Zhaparov, and a separate meeting with Presidential Foreign Policy Advisor Aibek Moldogazyev. In both meetings, Petraeus offered thanks for the personal efforts of the Ministers to secure a deal on the Transit Center at Manas; discussed U.S.-Kyrgyzstan shared interests of combating extremism, terrorism, and drug trafficking in the region; highlighted U.S. humanitarian assistance efforts by the Transit Center; and encouraged the further strengthening of U.S.-Kyrgyzstan relations. Sarbayev told Petraeus that Kyrgyzstan wanted to increase the level of cooperation and partnership with the U.S., noting his upcoming trip to the U.S. for the Annual Bilateral Consultations. As the Ambassador had done previously, General Petraeus warned the Ministers that there were alternatives to the Transit Center at Manas and that other Central Asian countries had offered the U.S. transit facilities for regional operations. All the Ministers clearly understood the point. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) U.S. CENTCOM Commander General David Petraeus visited Kyrgyzstan August 15-18 to meet with Kyrgyz Government officials. On August 17, Petraeus met jointly with Foreign Minister Kadyrbek Sarbayev and First Deputy Minister of Defense Askarebek Zhaparov. Also on August 17, Petraeus met with Presidential Foreign Policy Advisor Aibek Moldogazyev. Following his official meetings, Petraeus visited the American University of Central Asia and toured the facilities. Ambassador Gfoeller accompanied Petraeus to all meetings.

MFA AND MOD PRAISE U.S.-KYRGYZSTAN RELATIONSHIP

13. (C) In a joint meeting with Foreign Minister Kadyrbek Sarbayev and First Deputy Minister of Defense Askarebek Zhaparov, the Foreign Minister started by warmly welcoming General Petraeus and saying that Kyrgyzstan wanted to strengthen its cooperation and relationship with the U.S. He said that the U.S. and Kyrgyzstan shared mutual interests in guaranteeing security in the region, including in

Afghanistan. The FM highlighted that the operation of the Transit Center at Manas International Airport represented Kyrgyzstan's interests in continuing active security cooperation with the U.S. in the region. Sarbayev added that his government's top priority now was to develop and strengthen Kyrgyzstan-U.S. relations.

¶4. (C) General Petraeus thanked Sarbayev for his personal work on the Transit Center and his important role in concluding the agreement. General Petraeus emphasized that stability in Afghanistan, regional security, defeating extremism, and countering narcotics trafficking were in the interests of all the countries in the region, including Russia. General Petraeus and FM Sarbayev agreed that the bilateral dialogue regarding the Transit Center would be a two-way street, with each side offering its opinions. General Petraeus requested that Sarbayev and Zhaparov pass along to President Bakiyev his congratulations on his re-election and recent birthday.

¶5. (C) Speaking "as a friend and a partner," however, General Petraeus warned Sarbayev and Zhaparov that there were alternatives to the Transit Center at Manas (as the Ambassador had done previously). He added that other Central Asian countries had offered the U.S. transit facilities for regional operations. Both Ministers clearly understood the point. General Petraeus quickly added, however, that the U.S. wanted to continue its partnership with Kyrgyzstan and was also looking to strengthen it. General Petraeus told Sarbayev and Zhaparov that he valued Kyrgyzstan's representative at CENTCOM, saying that the representative's

BISHKEK 00000947 002 OF 004

work was positive for the U.S. and Kyrgyzstan.

¶6. (C) General Petraeus told Sarbayev and Zhaparov that the U.S. was moving forward to assist Manas International Airport get International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) certification, adding that the certification could reduce insurance costs for aircraft using the airport and possibly increase the number of flights into Manas. In addition, he said that the U.S. was working to upgrade Kyrgyzstan's air traffic control system. General Petraeus explained that he had signed a "Central Asia First" policy directive that would enable more Kyrgyz companies to provide goods and services to the U.S. military.

¶7. (C) General Petraeus said that in October the Transit Center would host a vendors conference in Bishkek to inform local companies on how to do business with the Department of Defense. General Petraeus said that the first shipment of military cargo was being prepared for shipment through Kyrgyzstan to Afghanistan and that a Kyrgyz company, First Transport Company, had won the first shipment contract. Sarbayev told General Petraeus that he was grateful for the vendors conference and highlighted the importance of Kyrgyz companies participating in Transit Center projects as well as the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

¶8. (C) Sarbayev told General Petraeus that he would be traveling to Washington for the Annual Bilateral Consultations and he looked forward to having productive meetings with senior U.S. government officials. He said that he would present several proposals to the U.S. in order to discuss the new strategic and regional cooperation partnership. He highlighted several areas of interest, including increasing trade and economic relations with the U.S.; starting education, science, and culture exchanges; and expanding military cooperation. He finished by saying that he wanted to give U.S.-Kyrgyzstan relations a new meaning based on the strong U.S.-Kyrgyzstan partnership. General Petraeus issued Sarbayev an "open invitation" to visit CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa whenever he wished.

¶9. (C) General Zhaparov offered a positive assessment of the U.S.-Kyrgyzstan military-to-military relationship,

highlighting the areas of successful cooperation. (NOTE: Minister of Defense Bakytbek Kalyev was on vacation and not in Bishkek to meet with General Petraeus. END NOTE). Like FM Sarbayev, Zhaparov said that the Ministry of Defense wanted to develop further its cooperation with the U.S., including equipping Kyrgyz forces, military education, and training with special operations forces. He briefed General Petraeus on MOD progress in creating additional task forces in the south of the country. Zhaparov reviewed the status of U.S. military assistance provided to the MOD, including the NCO Professional Development facility, the Special Operations facility, and the armed forces hospital, which Zhaparov said would serve all armed forces of Kyrgyzstan.

¶10. (C) General Petraeus highlighted the importance of military-to-military cooperation, especially the hospital and training center. He told Zhaparov about the CENTCOM Commander's Fellowship at the Marshall Center and encouraged the MOD to identify its best career officers as candidates for the fellowship. General Petraeus told Sarbayev and Zhaparov that he wanted to expand the cooperation between SOCCENT and the State Committee for National Security (GKNB) "Alphas" unit, congratulating the government for the recent successful operation against terrorists in southern Kyrgyzstan.

¶11. (C) General Petraeus briefed Sarbayev and Zhaparov on his discussions with the commander of the Transit Center and said that the Transit Center was working on several humanitarian assistance projects in the local community. General Petraeus said that the rehabilitation project at the Birdik School was almost complete and that CENTAF Commander Lt. Gen. Hostage and SOCCENT commander MG Cleveland would be in Bishkek in early September for its opening ceremony. General Petraeus said that he hoped MG Cleveland would be able to meet with

BISHKEK 00000947 003 OF 004

the MOD to discuss cooperation and possible future plans. He told Sarbayev and Zhaparov about two possible addition Transit Center humanitarian assistance projects, a women's business incubator/shelter project and a children's shelter with a combined value of more than USD 800,000. Lastly, General Petraeus said that he had ordered the Transit Center to prepare a list of items to stock in the event of a natural disaster in Kyrgyzstan.

¶12. (C) General Petraeus gave Sarbayev and Zhaparov a detailed briefing on the current level of fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. General Petraeus said that the U.S. would use some of the lessons learned from Iraq in Afghanistan, noting, however, that the local situation in Afghanistan was different from Iraq. FM Sarbayev agreed with General Petraeus that Afghanistan's people, culture and traditions were different and that more than just military force was necessary to achieve U.S. and Kyrgyzstan goals there. Sarabayev explained to General Petraeus that President Bakiyev wanted to play a role in the peace process in Afghanistan. To that end, he had created the "Bishkek Initiative," a series of proposed conferences in Bishkek where all the stakeholders in Afghanistan could discuss Afghanistan. Sarbayev claimed that Kyrgyzstan would be ideal to host the conferences because it understood the mentality and culture of Afghanistan while not having any political ties to ethnic groups there.

PRESIDENT'S FOREIGN POLICY ADVISOR LOOKS TO INCREASED COOPERATION

¶13. (C) In a separate meeting on August 17, General Petraeus met with Presidential Foreign Policy Advisor Aibek Moldogaziyev and reiterated the same points and issues as in the morning meeting with the Foreign Minister and Deputy Minister of Defense. General Petraeus said that he was pleased an agreement for the Transit Center had been reached and thanked Moldogaziyev for his personal role in securing

the final deal. He told Moldogaziyev that he appreciated Kyrgyzstan's shared vision against extremism, terrorism and drug trafficking. He warned Moldogaziyev, however, that there were alternatives to the Manas Transit Center and that other Central Asian countries have offered similar logistics sites for U.S. transportation operations.

¶14. (C) Moldogaziyev briefed General Petraeus on his thoughts regarding the current situation in Afghanistan, highlighting the need for more non-conventional methods. He said that the Transit Center agreement showed that Kyrgyzstan was dedicated to making a positive effort in Afghanistan and in the fight against terrorism and extremism. Moldogaziyev said that Kyrgyzstan looked to increase its cooperation with the U.S., noting that as part of the Transit Center agreement the U.S. would provide counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics training as well as economic assistance. He added that he looked forward to increased U.S.-Kyrgyzstan military cooperation. In his briefing on the military situation in Afghanistan and Iraq, General Petraeus said that the new Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, may visit Central Asia to discuss additional cooperation.

¶15. (C) General Petraeus told Moldogaziyev that he wanted to expand training between U.S. Special Forces and the GKNB "Alphas," congratulating the Alphas for their recent operations in the south of Kyrgyzstan killing/capturing several terrorists. General Petraeus noted that the U.S. shared Kyrgyzstan's concerns about terrorists from Afghanistan and Pakistan infiltrating Kyrgyzstan and said that he wanted to work with the government on border issues. At a lunch at the Ambassador's residence prior to his meeting with Moldogaziyev, General Petraeus raised the issue of the seized weapons from 2008 with him (REFTEL). Moldogaziyev said that he would look into the case and see what he could do.

¶16. (C) COMMENT: General Petraeus' message on the possible

BISHKEK 00000947 004 OF 004

alternatives to the Transit Center at Manas was clearly received by the Kyrgyz ministers. During the cordial meetings with General Petraeus, the Kyrgyz side did not raise any contentious issues that they have previously raised with the Ambassador, including the Hatfield-Ivanov decision and the winning bid by a Turkish company to construct the ramp and loading pad at the Transit Center. At his first meeting with General Petraeus, Presidential Foreign Policy Advisor Moldogaziyev seemed to go out of his way to praise the general and his philosophy on counter-insurgency and also did not raise any difficult issues. END COMMENT.

¶17. (U) General Petraeus has cleared this cable.
GFOELLER